

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

Introduction

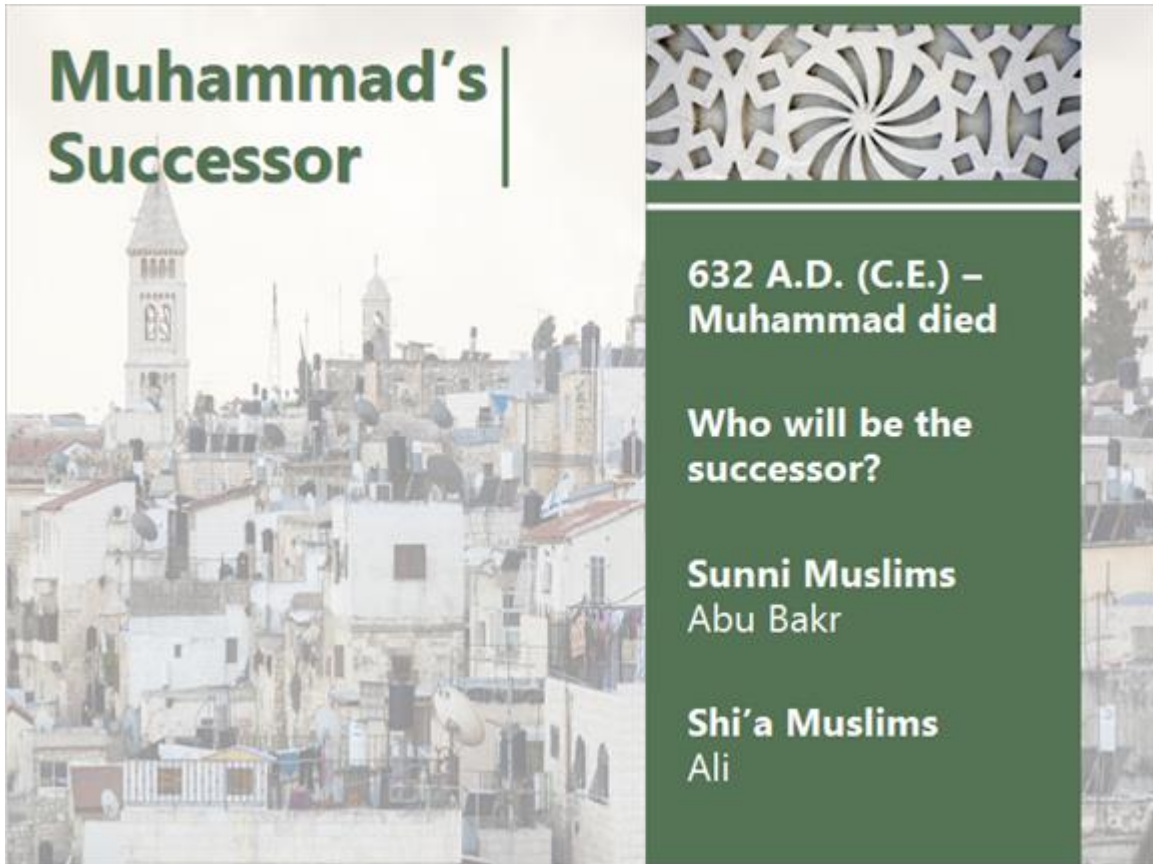


Click NEXT to explore how the Islamic faith continued to spread and grow as a major world religion with Muhammad's successors.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

Muhammad's Successor



Muhammad's Successor

632 A.D. (C.E.) – Muhammad died

Who will be the successor?

Sunni Muslims
Abu Bakr

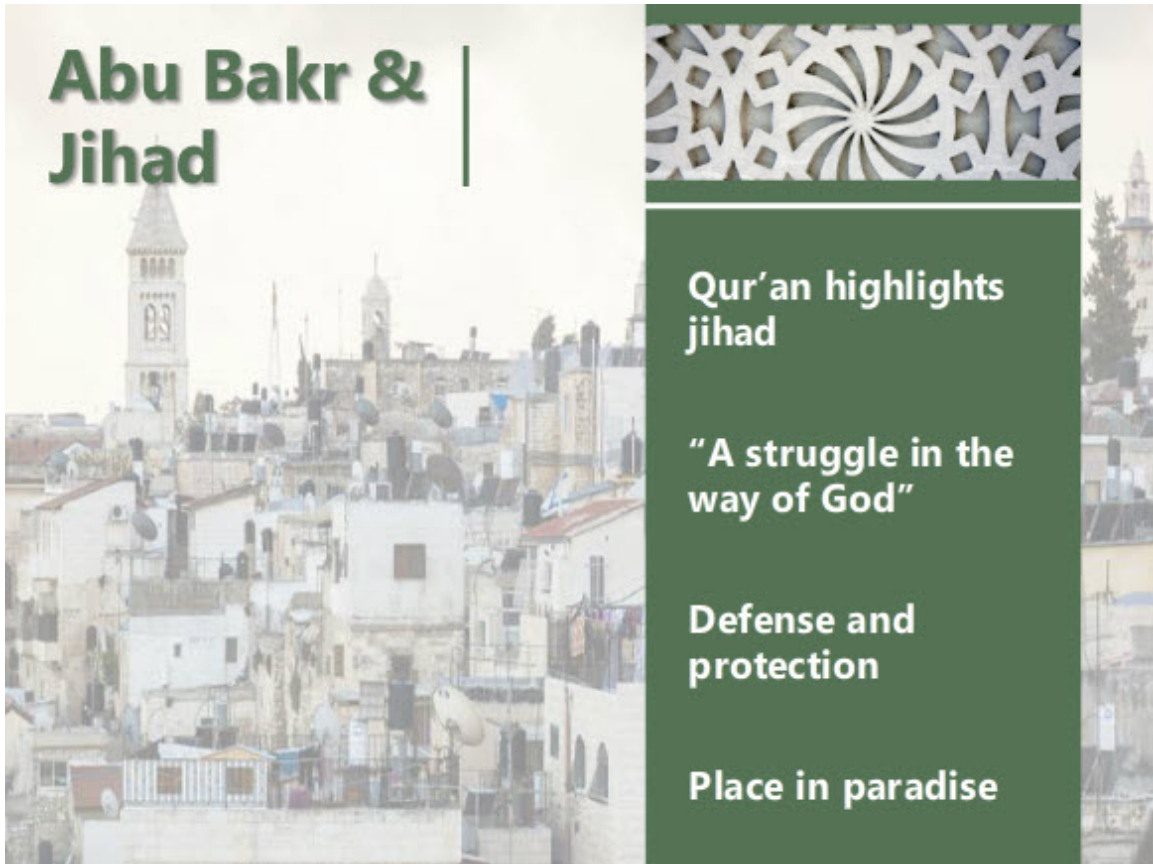
Shi'a Muslims
Ali

After Muhammad died in 632 A.D. (C.E.), a fight erupted about who should become his successor, since the Prophet only had daughters. Sunni Muslims believed the rightful successor was Muhammad's father-in-law and friend, Abu Bakr; and Shi'a Muslims thought Muhammad chose his son-in-law, Ali, as the successor. Sunni Muslims won this fight, and Abu Bakr became the first caliph, or successor.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

Abu Bakr and Jihad



Abu Bakr & Jihad

Qur'an highlights jihad

"A struggle in the way of God"

Defense and protection

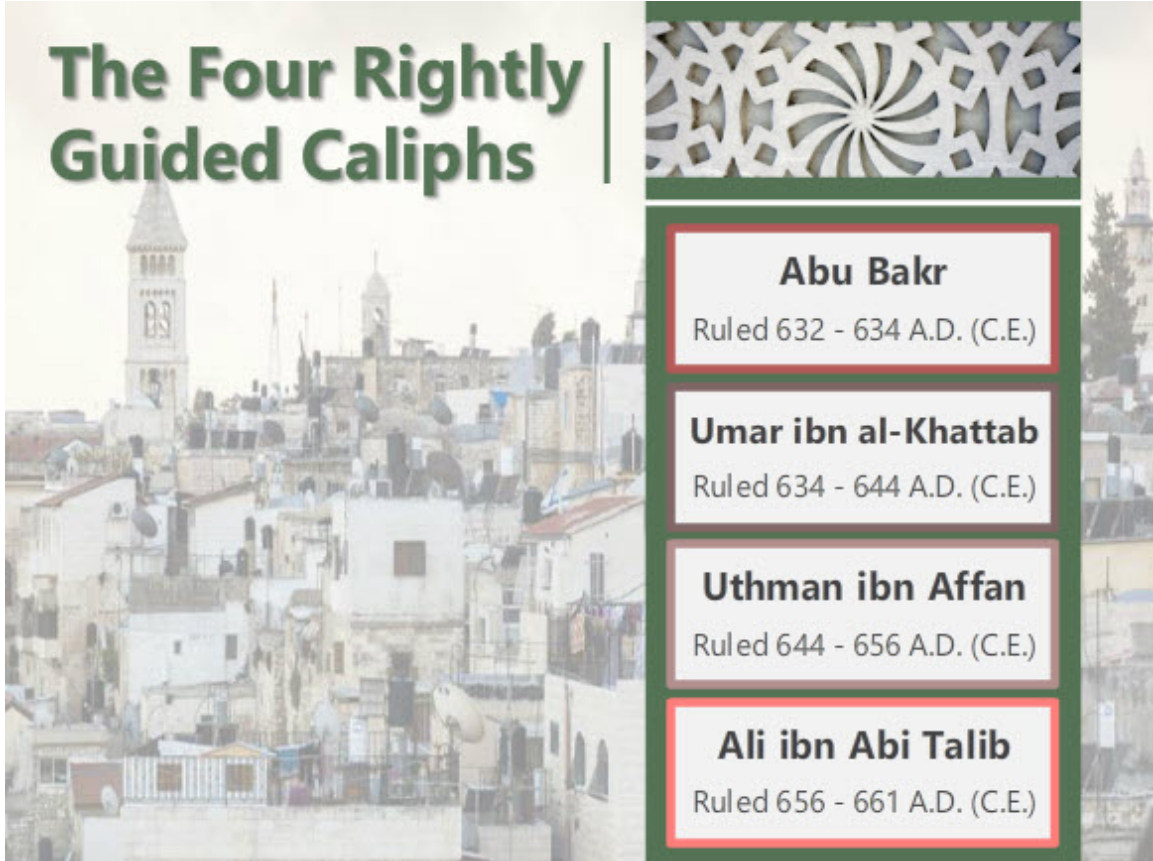
Place in paradise

Abu Bakr continued the teachings of Muhammad, and helped spread Islam from the cities of Mecca and Medina to the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. Part of the motivation to spread Islam came from the Qur'an, which highlights the concept of jihad. Literally translated, jihad means "a struggle in the way of God." Jihad is an important religious and spiritual duty for Muslims, and is the basis for the defense and protection of Islam. As a result, Arab armies fought for Islam with the belief that it guaranteed them a place in paradise upon their death.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

The Four Rightly Guided Caliphs



The infographic features a background image of a cityscape with a prominent minaret. The title 'The Four Rightly Guided Caliphs' is displayed in large green text. To the right, a decorative geometric pattern is visible. Below the title, four boxes list the caliphs and their ruling periods:

Abu Bakr Ruled 632 - 634 A.D. (C.E.)
Umar ibn al-Khattab Ruled 634 - 644 A.D. (C.E.)
Uthman ibn Affan Ruled 644 - 656 A.D. (C.E.)
Ali ibn Abi Talib Ruled 656 - 661 A.D. (C.E.)

Although Abu Bakr died after only two years in leadership, his rule marked the start of the Age of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs, or the rule of the first four leaders after the death of Muhammad. During this time, Muslims expanded the Islamic Empire through many military conquests into the increasingly weak Persian and Byzantine Empires. As Islamic influence increased, the Empire added territory throughout the Fertile Crescent, Iran, and Central Asia, including the important cities of Damascus and Jerusalem. Eventually, the Islamic Empire gained control over Persia. Although each of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs only ruled for a short time, they united the warring tribes of the Arabian Peninsula with a common purpose.

Click on the names of the early caliphs to view when they ruled. The last of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs, Ali ibn Abi Talib, also known as Ali, was the son-in-law of Muhammad.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

Divisions of Islam

The infographic is titled "Divisions of Islam" and is set against a background of a city skyline with a mosque. It is divided into two main sections: a light brown section for Sunni Muslims and a dark green section for Shi'a Muslims. The Sunni section includes the text: "Sunni Muslims", "Muslim leaders should choose the caliph", "Consensus in the Muslim community", and "Abu Bakr". The Shi'a section includes the text: "Shi'a Muslims", "Ali", and "Caliphs must descend from Muhammad". A decorative white geometric pattern is visible on the left side of the infographic.

Division	Beliefs
Sunni Muslims	Muslim leaders should choose the caliph Consensus in the Muslim community Abu Bakr
Shi'a Muslims	Ali Caliphs must descend from Muhammad

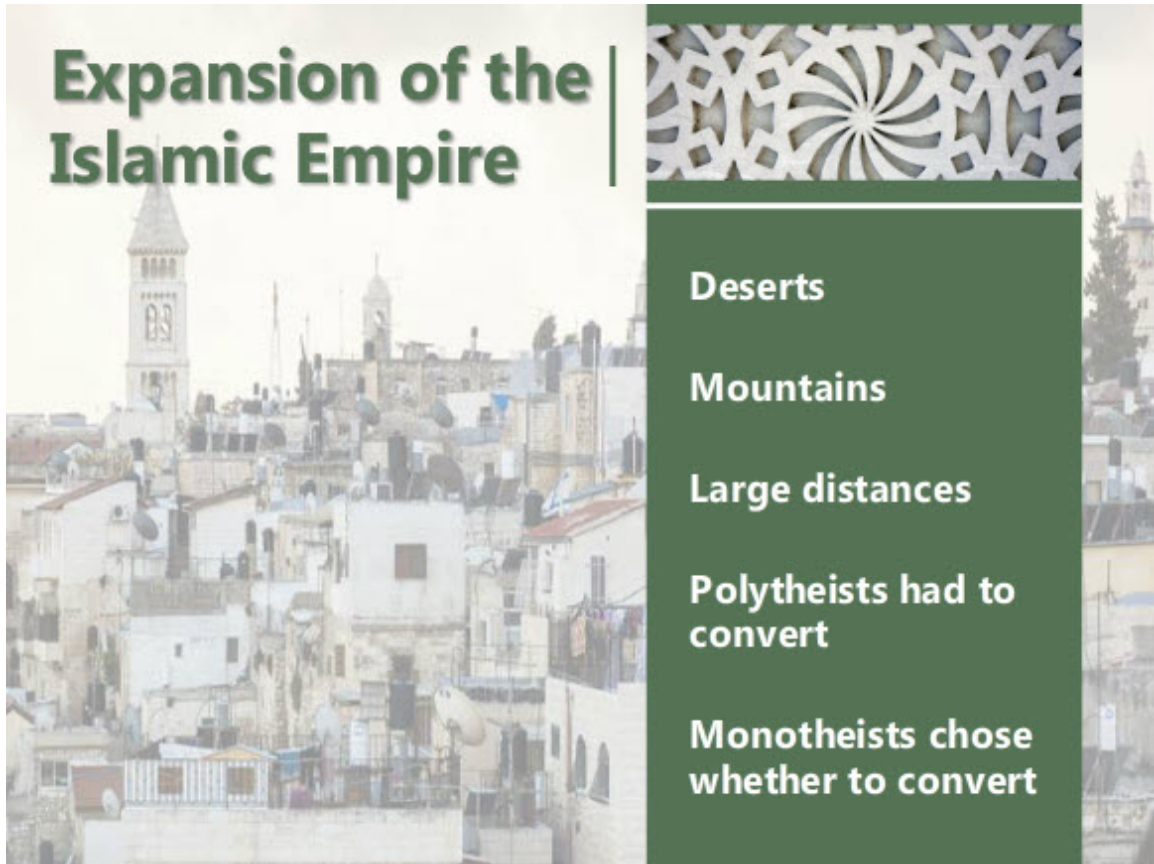
As previously mentioned in this interactivity, the political unity of Muslims under Muhammad's leadership did not last. Conflict arose over who should become the Prophet's successor. Sunni Muslims believed Muslim leaders should choose the caliph as part of a consensus in the Muslim community. Conversely, Shi'a Muslims believed that Muhammad had chosen Ali as the first caliph, and as such, all caliphs must descend from Muhammad. When Abu Bakr became the first caliph, it seemed the Sunni Muslims had won this disagreement, however, the Sunni-Shi'a division continued after the death of the fourth caliph, Ali, in 661 A.D. (C.E.). These differences persist in modern times. Presently, more than three quarters of all Muslims are Sunni, and a quarter are Shi'a or other sects.

Sufis are another sect within the Muslim community. They are Islamic mystics who are Sunni, or more rarely, Shi'a. Sufis seek to become close to God while they are alive. This sect of Islam developed when some Muslims believed the later leaders of the Islamic Empire had become too worldly. To Sufis, jihad refers to the inner struggle people must endure to truly know Allah.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

Expansion of the Islamic Empire



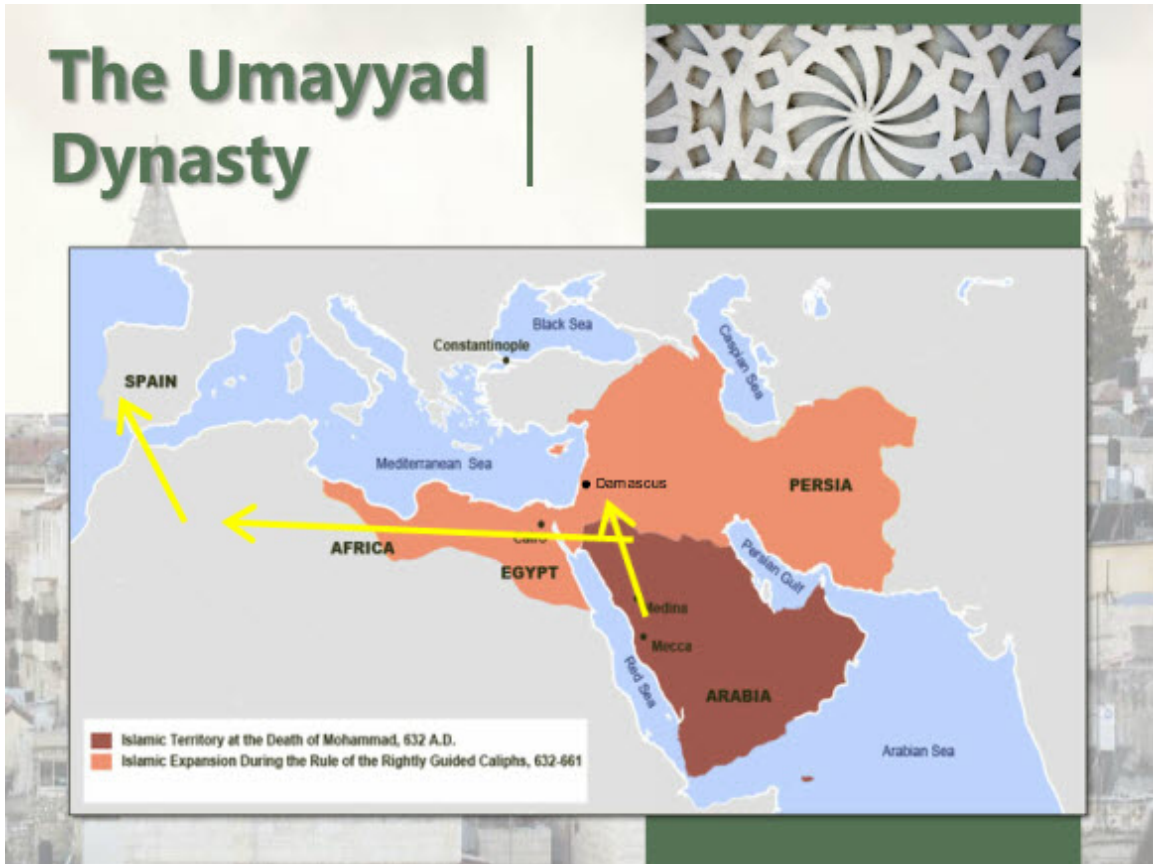
Expansion of the Islamic Empire increased, despite the geographic barriers provided by the harsh environment of the Arabian Peninsula, which included deserts, mountains, and large distances. Since the Arabian Peninsula was already a crossroads for trade, people traveling through the area spread Islam to other parts of the world. Trade routes through Mecca and Medina provided access to areas in Africa, Southeast Asia, and parts of India.

When the Islamic Empire conquered other lands, polytheists were forced to convert to Islam. Those who observed monotheistic religions like Judaism and Christianity, however, were given the option to convert. Often, monotheists from those other religions chose to convert to Islam because of threats for higher taxes and property loss.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

The Umayyad Dynasty



In 661 A.D. (C.E.), Mu'awiya succeeded Ali. Under his leadership, the position of caliph became hereditary. From 661 to 750 A.D. (C.E.), members of the Umayyad Dynasty ruled the Islamic Empire. During this time, the capital of the empire was moved from Mecca to Damascus, in modern-day Syria.

Throughout the Umayyad Dynasty, the Islamic Empire continued to expand. At the beginning of the eighth century, the empire stretched across northern Africa. In 711 A.D. (C.E.), Arab forces crossed the Strait of Gibraltar into Spain. In just fifteen years, the influence of the Islamic Empire spread throughout most of the country, and it looked as though Islam would continue to spread across Europe.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

The Battle of Tours



The infographic features a title 'The Battle of Tours' in green text at the top left. Below the title is a 19th-century painting depicting a chaotic battle scene with soldiers on horseback and on foot, engaged in combat. A map of France is visible at the bottom left of the painting, with a red dot indicating the location of Tours. To the right of the painting is a green vertical panel with white text. At the top of this panel is a decorative white geometric pattern. The text on the panel provides key facts about the battle: the year 732, the location in modern-day France, the number of casualties for both sides, and the year 750 when Muslim expansion into Western Europe halted.

The Battle of Tours



19th century depiction of the Battle of Tours

732
City of Tours is in modern-day France

Franks suffered 1,500 casualties

Muslims suffered 15,000 casualties

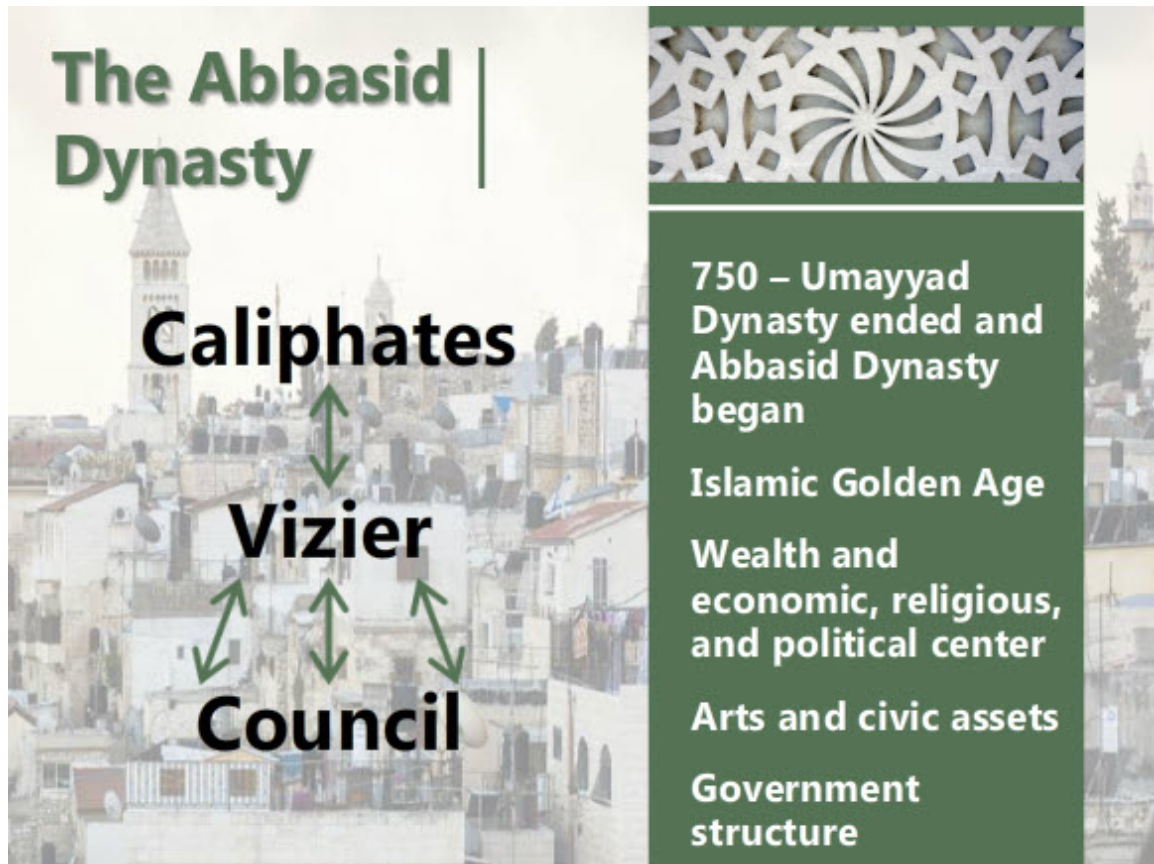
750 - Muslim expansion into Western Europe halted

The Islamic Empire continued to expand until 732 A.D. (C.E.), when Muslims entered the northern part of modern-day France, and were stopped by the Franks at the Battle of Tours. During this battle, the Franks suffered one thousand five hundred casualties, and the Muslims suffered fifteen thousand casualties. By 750 A.D. (C.E.), Muslim expansion into Western Europe came to a halt.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

The Abbasid Dynasty



Confronted with growing resentment by non-Arabs in conquered lands, in addition to the continued conflict between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, the Umayyad Dynasty ended in 750 A.D. (C.E.) when Abu al-Abbas, a descendent of Muhammad's uncle, overthrew it and installed the Abbasid Dynasty.

The Abbasid Dynasty ruled for the next five hundred years during the Islamic Golden Age. In 762 A.D. (C.E.), the dynasty moved the capital of the Islamic Empire from Damascus to Baghdad, a city on the Tigris River that flourished as a major crossroads for trade. This added to the Islamic Empire's wealth, and positioned the city as an economic, religious, and political center that helped spread Islam across Asia and the Middle East.

Throughout the ninth century, Abbasid caliphs invested in the arts and civic assets. The administrative structure of the government changed, allowing any Muslim to hold public office regardless of ethnicity. In addition, the Islamic Empire developed a more sophisticated bureaucracy that included a prime minister, known as a vizier, who interacted directly with a council of leaders on behalf of the caliph. As the bureaucracy grew, sections of the Empire began to break off and form their own caliphates. For example, Spain, Morocco, and Egypt developed their own dynasties and individual centers of power.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

Turkish Invasions and the Crusades



Turkish Invasion & The Crusades

Weaken

Seljuk Turks took political and military power

Abbasid Dynasty retained religious authority

Turks won the Battle of Manzikert

15th century French depiction of the Battle of Manzikert

As the eleventh century approached, the Islamic Empire began to weaken. This allowed a Turkish group, the Seljuk Turks, to overtake the political and military power of the Islamic Empire. The Abbasid Dynasty still retained religious authority. In 1071, in a region that is modern-day Turkey, the Turks fought and defeated forces from the Byzantine Empire in the Battle of Manzikert. They acquired much of the Anatolian Peninsula and cut off Europe's access to Jerusalem. In so doing, the Turks came into direct conflict with the Eastern Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire. This event, coupled with the destruction of sacred Christian sites and Christian persecution, became one of the main causes of wars between the Christians and Muslims known as the Crusades.

Take a moment to examine this map, which depicts several key battles that took place in the years leading up to the Battle of Manzikert, and allowed the Seljuk Turks to gain control of the Anatolian Peninsula.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

The Mongols

The Mongols

The Mongol army seizing and destroying Baghdad

1258 – Abbisid Dynasty ended

Mongol invaders overthrew Baghdad

Destroyed the city

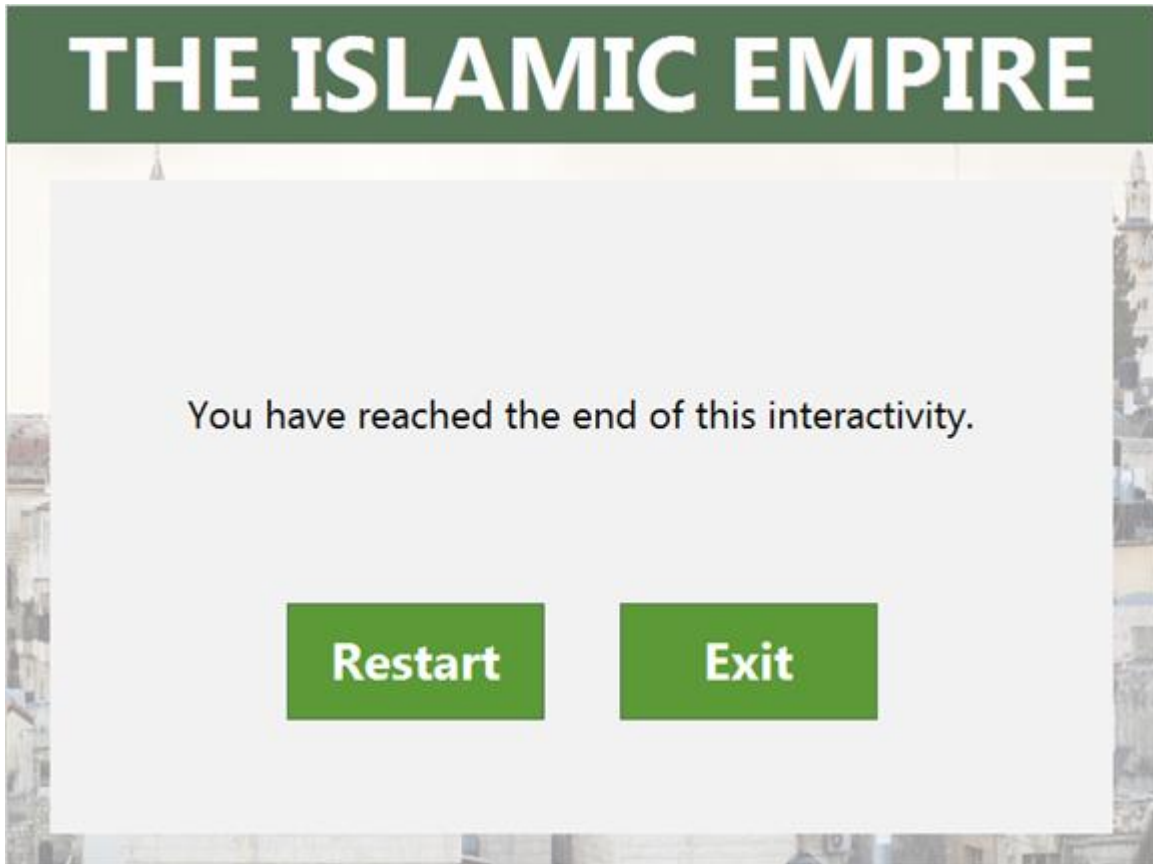
End of the Islamic Empire's Golden Age

The Abbasid Dynasty ended in 1258 A.D. (C.E.), when invaders from the Mongol Empire in Central Asia overthrew the city of Baghdad. The invaders destroyed the city by burning schools, civic buildings, and places of worship. This event is typically regarded as the end of the Islamic Empire's Golden Age.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 2 Content: The Islamic Empire

Conclusion



You have reached the end of this interactivity.